



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# DECORATION & FURNITURE

## INSTRUCTION IN CARPET DESIGNING.



FROM A DRAWING BY HOLBEIN.

SUCH progress has been made by the arts of design during the past few years in this country that American manufacturers are now largely independent of foreign sources. Especially is this the case in the carpet trade, in which the designs furnished here challenge comparison with the best work of the English

and French designers. So well established is this fact that in reviewing the whole field of design in this branch of trade the American manufacturers may be considered to illustrate it as completely as would those of England or France. Within the past decade the chief sources of inspiration have been Oriental fabrics, supplemented by mediæval and renaissance designs. This statement applies to color as well as to form. These sources have been so drawn upon, and their peculiarities so familiarized, that the designer has their different elements at his finger ends and stands ready to furnish the most agreeable adaptations of any style that may be desired. The result of this thorough study of such excellent models is felt and appreciated in all our homes. But we have now arrived at that point when, like the Athenians of old, we inquire for something new, and we feel that the demand for new motives and new color schemes may as justly be made of American designers and American manufacturers as of those of any other country.

It is true that there is no American manufacturer who is not eager to secure original work, and willing to expend large sums for it. From what sources is there reason to expect it, and what influences are brought to bear to compass its production? The solution of the question seems to lie in the designing rooms, and in the direction in which the education of designers is tending. Outside of these rooms, it is well known, there is but little designing done. And within these, if the study of design lies along the same Oriental sources, little can be hoped for outside of greater perfection in those lines. The Bigelow Carpet Company is a representative house, and one that feels as great an interest in producing original and artistic designs as any house in this country or Europe. In its employ are men who have been trained under South Kensington and other excellent English influences, and who produce some of the best Oriental, mediæval, and renaissance designs. Those prepared for the opening season are exquisite in form, and novel and artistic in color. Nevertheless, however beautiful they are, they are still essentially Persian, Japanese, or mediæval in form, and merely translated into different color schemes by their clever producers.

It is under these men that the designers of the future are being trained. And the question now is how far their methods tend to the production of original work. Boys enter the designing rooms at the ages of twelve and thirteen, and presumably have some natural predilection for their trade. Their first duties are the grinding and mixing of colors. The thorough knowledge of one's medium is invaluable in every art, and it is safe to say that this practical knowledge of color, particularly if a boy is at all observant and understands the aims of his craft, might lead him in new and important directions when he comes to use color independently. In time he is set to putting in the ground color when the design has been already outlined. Thence he is promoted to copying designs, and is easily inducted into coloring them also. Here the greatest accuracy is necessary, owing to the requirements of the machinery. This practice, it may be seen, is as essential to a practical designer as the manipulation of the keys to a player on

the piano. This work, done under the eye of the master, is merely mechanical, but the boy insensibly gets a grasp of the whole matter which is afterward invaluable to him; still, to recur to the previous simile, this has as little to do with the production of original work as the facile manipulation of the keys has with the composition of a sonata. As the copying goes on the boy gradually acquires familiarity with styles. He has, moreover, the benefit of the comparison and criticism which goes on in every designing room. When further advanced he becomes able to transfer designs from the sketch to the working drawing, and to take designs from other fabrics and translate them into carpet designs. This implies a thorough knowledge of the technical requirements of his art. Following this is the duty of adapting designs. It is but natural in all his varied work that he should display particular aptitude in some one direction. He may become especially serviceable in working out Persian designs or Japanese motives. From one point of view he thus makes himself more valuable, as in a certain way he can be depended on, and the probability is that he is kept at such work, and his growth in other directions is correspondingly checked.

To sum up the results of this training, the boy has the mechanism of his craft with that perfectness which constant practice toward practical definite ends alone gives. He has also acquired in the same way a knowledge of drawing within certain limits, a practical knowledge of color, a familiarity with styles, and a certain readiness to adapt a suggestion from a particular style and carry it out to meet a certain end. Within these limits he can design, but it is easy to see that he is hampered, first, by his want of knowledge of forms in general, and, second, by the ruts of other men in which he has been forced to move. While he has received thorough technical training and with it useful intelligence along certain lines he lacks wider artistic training, and if he proves to be an original designer without it, that only demonstrates him to be the exceptional being who must not be taken into general consideration.

It is not surprising to learn that most of the boys employed in representative designing rooms, such as that of the Bigelow Company, pursue free-hand drawing in the different evening schools which have sprung up. This is, of course, a step in the right direction, but its importance is not sufficiently emphasized. Boys naturally feel their want of skill and take this method of acquiring facility, but this is not sufficient. Facility is certainly desirable, but not as important as the filling of portfolios with studies of new forms taken directly from nature, full of hints for future work, which their technical training has enabled them to render available. Without these outside studies being particularly insisted on it is doubtful whether a boy, unless he shows special aptitude for original work, and possesses ideas which force him to expression, can counteract the results of the routine which he daily pursues, or succeed in escaping the mannerism which his studies under a regular designer naturally induces.

There is an analogy in all the arts of design, and it was made very plain last year, in the wall-paper competition, that when called upon to furnish original designs the craftsmen only produced hodge-podges of different styles, while the technically imperfect work of artists of wider intelligence, but of no experience in wall-paper designing, was marked by beauty and originality in both motives and color schemes, and bore away the prizes. Circumstances which closed the doors of the designing rooms of manufacturers to women and forced them to obtain their instruction in some other way, have given the opportunity of comparing the old system with that which obtains in the women's class in carpet designing undertaken by the Woman's Institute of Technical Design. In the latter case it is only possible to state the method, as in its first year of existence there can be no results. The method, however, fully shows the tendency of the training and whether it is directed to this or that end. The keystone of the whole structure

is drawing; this precedes all mechanical study of practical carpet designing. For those not proficient in drawing there is an elementary class, which begins with straight lines, proceeds then to curves, and through a series of geometrical problems leads to the construction of geometrical designs. Drawing from solids is practised so far as perspective is needed in free-hand drawing from nature. In this the course of drawing culminates. Studies are made from the natural plant, and these are colored from nature. The plant is then resolved into its elements and separate studies of these are made, accompanied by lessons on the art of conventionalizing flowers. Then a certain flower is designed, as, for example, the convolvulus, to be arranged around a common centre within a certain geometrical form—for example, the octagon. Out of a class of twelve or fourteen there result several designs of special beauty and merit.

With these exercises are given lessons in historical ornament, and an analysis of the elements of different styles and their underlying principles. Copies are made of historical ornament in free-hand drawing, and this is made the medium of studies in the enlargement of designs necessary in the use of the Jacquard. The completion of this course is signalized by twelve certificate plates made in each of the branches studied, whose merit or want of merit determines the giving of a diploma.

In the advanced class the technical adaptation of design to the needs of the machinery is studied by the aid of a loom, a Jacquard, and a printing drum. The exercises consist in adapting original designs to the various grades of carpet—two-ply, three-ply, body Brussels, or Wilton. Here it is observed that the training which the boy first acquires is the last required; and that the knowledge of drawing and the principles of design which he gets through experience and observation is here made a definite and leading part of the regular instruction. The weakest part of the course seems to be its want of any provision for the development of new color schemes. This, however, may be an after consideration. It is but fair to add that however women may have been debarred by manufacturers from entering their designing rooms, the latter have in some instances shown a generous interest in the new undertaking. Mr. Kendall, of the Bigelow Carpet Company, has been especially prominent in this regard, not only aiding Mrs. Cory's pupils with the practical counsel of some of his best artists, but contributing even pecuniarily toward the success of the school. If Mrs. Cory's enterprise results in the production of artistic original work combined with the technical excellence of the professional designer, it is certain that no one will be quicker than Mr. Kendall and others in the carpet factories to give substantial recognition to the fact.

MARY GAY HUMPHREYS.

## AN ÆSTHETIC ENGLISH VILLAGE.

THE experiment of a "Queen Anne Village" has been made at Turnham Green, a London suburb. The view of the projectors, we are told by Mr. William H. Thorp—an architect of Leeds who recently visited the place and made a thorough tour of inspection—was "to make life less uninteresting and prosaic by devising houses for the middle classes which, instead of being badly arranged and of mean and commonplace appearance, should be pleasing to behold and comfortable to reside in." Of the picturesqueness of Bedford Park—so the place is named—there seems to be no doubt. It is described as "a village that might have come out of a picture book by Caldecott, the Tabard hostelry claiming attention in the foreground with the dormers and cupola of the church peeping above the roof; while roads bordered with trees lead off in different directions, having on either side hipped and gable-roofed houses with their balustraded balconies and cunningly devised stacks of chimneys, each possessing a garden visible through the open wooden palisades, dedicated as a rule to the growth of old-fashioned flowers, such as the hollyhock,

sweetwilliam, sunflower, chrysanthemum, and graceful white lily, besides other sweet-scented favorites."

The interior decorations and other features of one of the houses are described as follows: To commence with the drawing-room: the dado, with surbase mould as well as the rest of the woodwork in the room, is painted peacock-blue, the ceiling is tinted in distemper a vellum color, and the walls above the surbase mould are covered with a paper of conventionalized design, bluish in color, of a rather different shade from the painted work. The fireplaces in both drawing and dining-rooms have small iron grates with ogee wave-line curved bars, surrounded with a broad margin of tiles; the whole enclosed in a framework of wood, with a shelf resting on slight wood brackets, and an overmantel of framed woodwork containing a small silvered glass mirror with bevelled edges. The doors have no muntins, but contain only two panels with raised moulded edges, one above and the other below the lock rail.

In the dining-room the ceiling is tinted as before; the woodwork is painted an Indian red color and slightly varnished, resembling in appearance old Chinese or Japanese lacquer work. The wall-paper above the dado has an all-over pattern in two shades of Indian red, and the dado is papered a similar color with a diaper arrangement of design. This scheme of color may seem to be suggestive of too much warmth, but in reality the effect is extremely good, and the room possesses a most comfortable appearance.

The side windows to both drawing and dining-rooms, in quaintly arched recesses, with a look-out upon the sides of adjoining property, are glazed in

leaded squares with tinted rolled plate glass. A nice three-sided bay-window in the dining-room is provided with a comfortable window-seat.

The woodwork of the breakfast-room is painted a yellowish olive-green, the dado paper is a diaper of grays, yellows, and gray-greens, the wall-paper above being of a grayish yellow green color.

The entrance hall has the dado round the walls and

lights in white and yellowish-green tinted rolled plate glass. The whole of the doors and the other woodwork are painted Indian red, as well as the balusters of the staircase, the newels and handrail being ebonized. The bedrooms need not be mentioned separately, and it must suffice to say that the woodwork in the various rooms is painted in different shades of sage and gray-greens; the wall-papers are some amber-yellow and

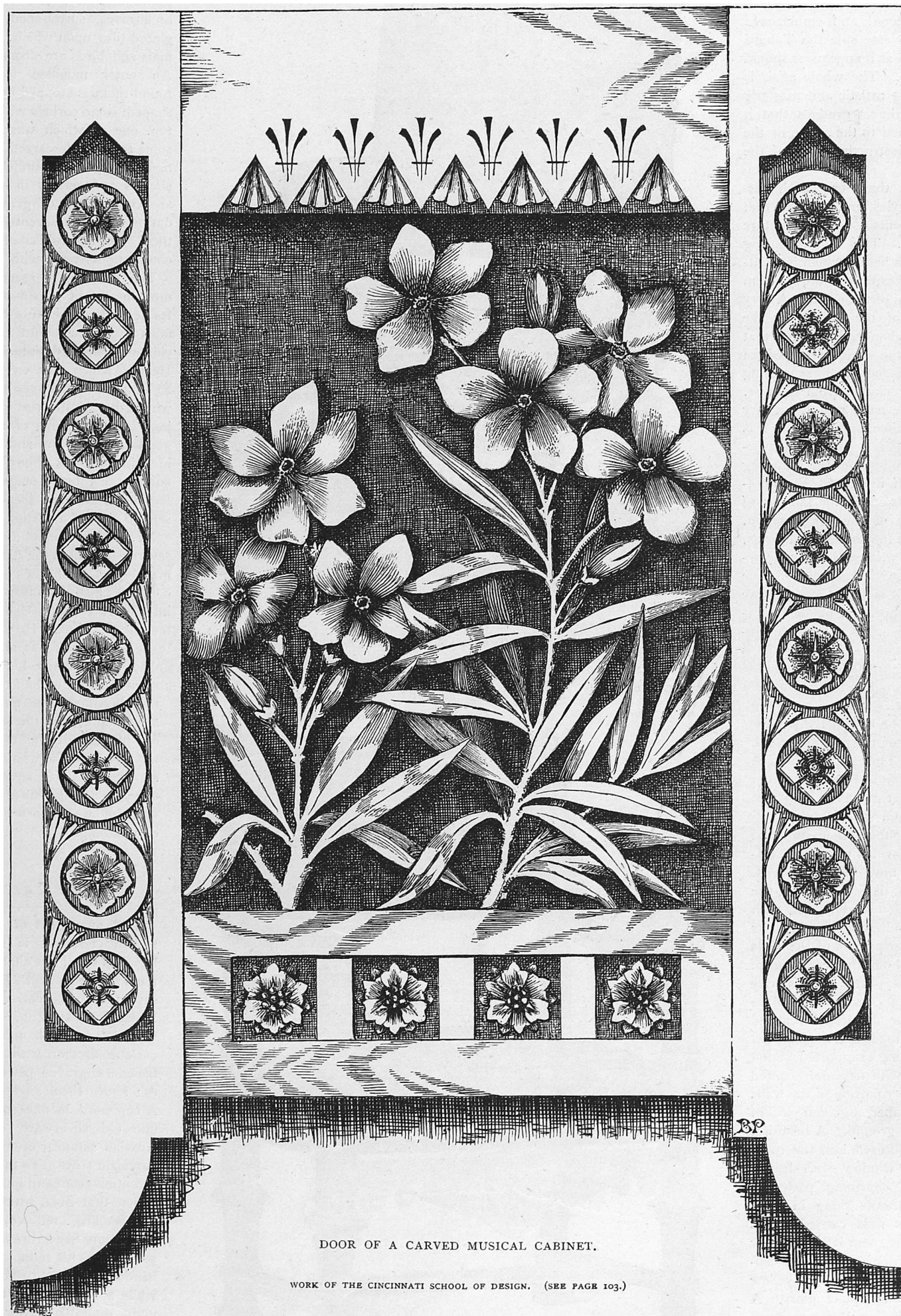
others pale shades of peacock-blue in color, and the ceilings distempered a creamy hue.

It seems that those who lease houses at Bedford Park are permitted to select the papers for their rooms and to choose the colors to be adopted in painting the woodwork. A certain sum is allowed by the landlord to be expended upon the papering and painting of the different rooms, and should the tenant wish to go beyond that amount in the decoration of his home he is allowed to do so and is debited with the excess over and above the stipulated sum.

The beautifully designed Morris wall-papers are in great request, and they have been largely used; it is chiefly owing to this fact that the charming, picturesque effect of the interiors is to be attributed. As the patterns and designs produced by this firm are very numerous and are made in various colors and shades, the danger of sameness and uniformity is escaped; and Mr. Carr, the founder of the colony, who is noted for his excellent taste and judgment,

is always ready to give advice to an intending householder as to the best mode of treating the interior so as to avoid a repetition of schemes of color and ornament carried out in adjoining habitations.

The Tabard inn, the hostelry of the estate, is described as "quite a picture, with its overhanging tile



DOOR OF A CARVED MUSICAL CABINET.

WORK OF THE CINCINNATI SCHOOL OF DESIGN. (SEE PAGE 103.)

up the sides of the staircase covered with Indian matting and capped with a wooden surbase mould. The motive of the wall-paper is of Chinese or Japanese origin, an Indian red pattern on a cream-colored ground. The ceiling, as before, is tinted a vellum-color.

The side window by the door is filled with leaded



hung gables, recessed, pillared and quaintly arched porch, and its glorious sign, painted by an R.A. (so it is said), swinging in the breeze and creaking very probably on dull winter stormy nights over the footway. The sign, which cost £120, is in itself worth the trouble of taking a journey to see even if there were nothing else worthy of observation. On one side the Tabard or herald is painted, arrayed in gorgeous mediæval costume, blowing a trumpet from which hangs an elaborately embroidered and emblazoned banner. On the reverse side the Tabard inn itself is pictured as it appears or should appear on fête days. The whole affair is executed in the most artistic and masterly manner, and one almost grudges that it should be left exposed to the action of the weather and the destructive fury of the elements."

Mr. Thorp says that the church displays a medley of styles, and he hopes that no further experiments of a similar nature will be attempted. The most pleasing feature is the cupola belfry, which is painted white and is a conspicuous object from almost every portion of the estate. A very noticeable feature of the interior is the great height of the chancel floor above that of the nave, and the antiquated wooden screen painted peacock-blue separating that portion of the church from the rest. The framing of the nave roof has a very substantial appearance, and the color it is painted—peacock-blue—contrasts favorably with the cream-color of the boarding to the under-side of the roof. Rush-bottomed chairs are provided for the use of the greater portion of the congregation, although there are a few low-backed forms, rather like old-fashioned settles, for the accommodation of a privileged few. A fine effective bit of color is to be seen at the east end in the shape of a baldachin arrangement over the super altar with canopy and side curtains. In color it is chiefly Indian red enriched with a number of vertical stripes of gold embroidery relieved upon a red ground.

What pleased Mr. Thorp most was the club. Its interior he considered a realization of the ideal of artistic taste. He thus describes it: The gentlemen have their billiard and smoke-room, it is true, while the ladies in their place have the use of a reading-room which is more particularly given up to their occupation and was at one time provided with a billiard-table which has now been removed. This reading-room, dedicated to the use of the fair sex, has a waxed floor, with Persian rugs strewn here and there on its surface. The lower portion of the walls is panelled with old oak that came out of one of Sir Christopher Wren's city churches, and a picturesque fireplace made up of similar material is carried across the angle of the room, the panelled upper mantel being supported upon Corinthian shafts with delicately carved capitals. The upper portion of the walls is covered with paper, a golden pattern on a bronzy green ground. A beautiful mellow light is diffused into the room from a large bay window with leaded lights, hung with charming patterned Madras muslin curtains slung in short lengths from brass rods carried across the transoms. The room is additionally lighted from a counter light in the ceiling, glazed in small squares with yellow toned cathedral rolled plate glass. A couch of carved Indian Bombay wood and some Sheraton and Chippendale chairs comprise the furniture of the room, not forgetting the central table, upon which is arranged an ample quantity of current literature, journals, illustrated periodicals, and the newest books from the Grosvenor Gallery lending library—all most temptingly displayed.

The gentlemen's billiard-room and reading-room, although two distinct apartments, are connected by

to that described in the ladies' reading-room, in squares of glass of a mellow golden color. The walls have dados of Japanese leather paper capped with a wooden surbase rail and papered above, a wild rose and honeysuckle pattern being used in the reading-room, and a conventionalized daisy design being adopted in the billiard-room. The woodwork is painted a warm chocolate brown. Open fireplaces are the means used for warming the rooms, the grates enclosed with stone architraves, surrounded with borders of glazed tiles upon which peacock blue animals and birds are disporting themselves. An outer moulded wooden architrave round them is stopped by projecting ogee-shaped stone corbels with a shelf on their top, one of which was used for placing some remarkable carved eastern grotesque figures supporting candlesticks. The bookshelves and settees in the reading-room are constructed of genuine carved oak, dating from the seventeenth century, and there are several comfortable lounging chairs, upholstered with artistic materials.

The drawing or assembly-room is the most important apartment in the building. Its decoration is exquisitely carried out, its most important feature being an elaborate chimney-piece, designed by Mr. Adam Heaton, which was on view at the Paris Exhibition. The upper mantel is arranged with a beautiful series of panels, containing classical figures of ancient gods and goddesses, nymphs and cherubs wrought in gold, upon an ebony ground. At one end of the room a stage is fitted up with footlights, the drop scene of which represents a view of a portion of the village.

Mr. J. W. Connon, another architect, severely criticises the planning and workmanship of the houses in the village. He compares many of the effects produced to little more than those of a stage carpenter's front scene. He says that at a distance the hamlet has all the picturesque beauty of an old English village, but approached more closely the stout woodwork of half timbered construction becomes the most attenuated of sawn planks, and the massive walls of an old homestead the thinnest of modern brickwork. The whole is denounced as an affectation of antique work without one spark of the sturdy honesty in construction which forms the true charm of old buildings.

#### ZOLA'S PARIS HOME.

THE apartment of Zola, the famous realistic novelist, in the Rue de Boulogne, is small but charmingly furnished, four rooms in all. Facing the street, says the Paris correspondent of *The Philadelphia Bulletin*, is the dining-room, with polished oak floor; at one side an antique dresser, with fine specimens of faience, engraved pewter pots and dishes; above them an aquarelle by Manet. A cupboard in one corner shows some fine old silverware, and a handsome Russian samovar ornaments the top of a porcelain stove. To the left is the parlor, reception-room and library combined. It is here that Zola, sitting in an enormous high-backed, red velvet chair, which looks more like a throne than an ordinary seat, writes his romances. At his left a handsome brass tripod holds papers, while a huge urn of the same material under the table serves as a scrap-basket. On the wall above his chair is an indifferently painted monotonous landscape. Opposite this is a three-quarter-length profile portrait of M. Zola, seated by a table. It is in the true impressionist style, and is signed by Manet, who is a personal friend of the novelist. On the wall are two portraits of Mme.



MODERN RENAISSANCE CHAIR.

MADE BY HAAS & SONS OF VIENNA.



MODERN RENAISSANCE CHAIR.

MADE BY ROUDILLON OF PARIS.

two side windows, depend to a great extent for their light upon large top lights glazed in a similar manner